



## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Secchi Dip-in!

July is Lakes Appreciation Month in BC!

– by C. Thomson, [Friends of Maltby Lake Watershed Society](#)

Saanich, BC – Watershed stewards across the province dedicated to the promotion of clean and healthy water sources, took to their local lakes during the month of July to measure water transparency (turbidity) using Secchi disks and other testing instruments.

In Rural Saanich's [Prospect Lake District](#), the [Friends of Tod Creek](#)

[Watershed](#) (FTCW), [Peninsula Streams Society](#) (PSS), and [Friends of Maltby Lake Watershed Society](#) (FMLWS) held Dip-ins on July 19<sup>th</sup> in two Tod Creek Watershed lakes: Prospect and Maltby. The Dip-in was led by FTCW Chair, Winona Pugh. It concluded with a small celebration (with cake).

[The BC Lake Stewardship Society](#) (BCLSS) coordinates the province-wide Dip-in. People of all backgrounds are encouraged to become involved and are given support to make their efforts satisfying and effective.

This year marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Secchi Dip-In. Data collected is used to assess trends in water turbidity and contributes to the body of information needed to develop policies to protect lakes. Through regular status reports, the initiative provides communities with monitoring results specific to their local lake and educational material on lake health in general.

Since 1994, more than 10,000 trained volunteers have generated 42,000 transparency records, giving a glimpse of lake water transparency at sites across North America and the world.



Photo: L.J. Derry

Woody Thomson, [Habitat Acquisition Trust](#) Steward, Maltby Lake, has participated in at least 10 Secchi Dip-ins.



Photo: C. Thomson

**25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Secchi Dip-in! At Maltby Lake – Headwaters of the Tod Creek Watershed.**

Pat Carfra, Audrey Barnes, Mary Haig-Brown, Michael Derry, Lori James Derry, Winona Pugh, Kayla Anderson, Brian Koval, Woody Thomson, Ian Duncan and Anne Allen ~ just some of the many Watershed Stewards of [Rural Saanich's Prospect Lake District](#).

Turbid waters inhibit light from penetrating the water column preventing plants from producing sufficient dissolved oxygen (through photosynthesis) to support aquatic life. When oxygen levels decline some aquatic life will die.



Photo: C. Thomson



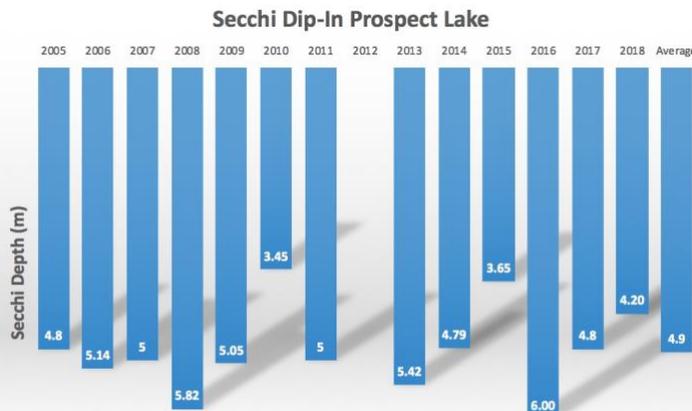
Photo: L.J. Derry



L to R: Ian Duncan, Anne Allen and Winona Pugh conducting water transparency testing in the Tod Creek Watershed.

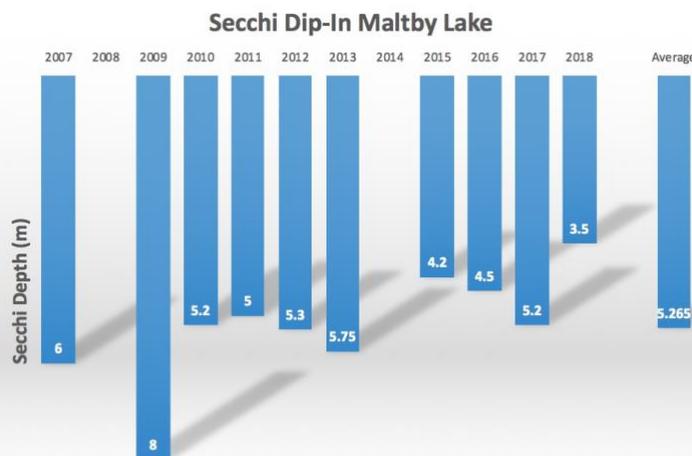
A Secchi Disk measurement should always be taken off the shady side of the boat.

FTCW Chair Winona Pugh works in collaboration with the BCLSS, PSS and a network of government and community partners to stay abreast of key considerations that may arise during various steps in the data collection process.



“The Secchi Dip-In reading is a snapshot of water clarity during the month of July, and the range in measurements doesn't necessarily indicate a problem. If transparency is measured through the season and from year to year, trends in transparency can be observed and can serve as an early warning that activities on the land are affecting water quality. The Secchi Dip-In numbers for Prospect Lake are fairly consistent and Maltby Lake shows a slight decrease over the years. Further sampling would be required in order to determine overall trends.”

– BC Lake Stewardship Society



The Secchi Disk is named in honor of **Father Pietro Angelo Secchi**, Priest, astronomer and scientific advisor to the Pope.



The Secchi Disk, as created by Father Secchi, remains a plain black and white, circular disk 30 cm (12 in) in diameter. Father Secchi first tested with it in the Mediterranean Sea on April 20, 1865.

**Reference:**

[The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Secchi Dip-in](#)  
[How to use a Secchi Disk](#)